

SPECIAL MEETING-MANSFIELD TOWN COUNCIL-MARCH 30,2005

Mayor Elizabeth Paterson called the Special meeting of the Mansfield Town Council to order at 6:33 p.m.

I. ROLL CALL

Present: Blair, Clouette, Haddad, Hawkins, Koehn, Paterson, Paulhus, Redding and Schaefer

II. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE COUNCIL

Mr. Ken Dautrich from the University of Connecticut Center for Survey Research and Analysis, spoke to the Council on his analysis of the survey of full-day kindergarten. This survey was distributed in late April of 2004. A random sampling of 1400 households from the list of taxpayers received the survey. 552 returned their questionnaires. Question was asked if some of the surveys went to apartment complexes. Mr. Dautrich was not sure. Specifically 53% said they supported going from a half day to a full day program and 35% said they opposed it.

Kristin Stone of 1140 Stafford Road, spoke in favor of the full-time Kindergarten.

Sarah Milius, 148 Chaffeeville Road, supports full-time kindergarten. She presented the Council with a petition of 85 signatures.

Joan Buck, 6 Sumner Dr., read a letter to the Council in favor of full-time kindergarten.

Monica Van Beusekom, 98 Candide Lane, endorsed the petition in favor of full-time kindergarten

Mary Lee Geary, 138 Spring Hill, is a teacher and advocates the need to have more time with the students such as in a full-time kindergarten.

Sandy Baxter, 5 Storrs Heights, spoke in favor of the all-day kindergarten; she coordinates the School Readiness Program.

Kyla Shafer, 5343 Storrs Road, spoke in favor of full-day kindergarten especially for those children with special needs.

Donald Curtis, 10 Fern Road supports full-time kindergarten, he feels that if you spend the money for early education you may not need to spend as much later. He is a teacher in Eastford.

Susannah Everett, 310 Gurleyville Road, she is a school psychologist for Ashford, and urged Board of Education and town put the resources into early education as it is in the Town's best interest. Prevention not remediation is most important.

Lesley Sweeny, 317 Mt. Hope Road, not in favor of full-time Kindergarten, she feels

it is a “want” and not a “need”.

Irene Sheehan, 42 Bassetts Bridge Road, supported full-time Kindergarten.

Martin Sommer, 410 Warrenville Road, spoke in favor of full-time kindergarten. The full day is in the best interest of the students. Full-time kindergarten will make Mansfield a better town. This is an option for children who cannot choose for themselves.

Joe Briody, 19 Little Lane, Not in favor or against. He would like this issue to be investigated more. He would like to know what are the compelling reasons for it? What is the deficiency in the education program as it is now?

Tracey Leavens, 32 Hunters Run, related her wonderful experience as a student in the Mansfield systems. She is young and enthusiastic for the great teachers who are excited about teaching kindergarten full-time.

Steve Pringle, 52 Maple Road, spoke in favor of the full-time program. He feels it is well worth the investment.

Kimberly Clark, 265 Browns Road, expressed the opinion that there is not enough to teach in a half-day class, the teachers need more time.

Lynn Lang Rodean, 162 South Bedlam Road, spoke in favor of the full-time kindergarten class.

Mayor Paterson read a statement from Representative Denise Merrill who supports full-day kindergarten.

III. NEW BUSINESS

1. Mansfield Board of Education (pp. 155-157)

Present for the Board of Education was: D. Hamlin, M. Feathers, W. Simpson, A. Holinko, S. Patwa and Supt. Gordon Schimmel and Mr. Fred Baruzzi, Assistant Superintendent.

Mr. Simpson, Chairman of the Board announced that the MEIU contract has been settled and the union has ratified it. The budget totals \$18,483,350. It is an increase of 8.71% as compared to the present year. This amount includes funds for two new certified positions to accomplish an expansion of Kindergarten from a half to a full-day program, providing two full day classes at each of the three elementary schools and six instructional assistants.

Superintendent Schimmel spoke on the Mansfield Middle School, It is not a failing school. The “No child left behind” creates a sense of failure when there is not one.

At 9:00 p.m. the Board of Education left.

2. Town-wide (159-165)

Employee Benefits, Insurance

Employee benefits are up significantly. Workman's comp, MERS and Medical insurance 160-161

Insurance-general liability 162-163

Contingency-annual appropriation to provide for emergency and/or unforeseen expenditures.

3. Public Safety

Overview Pg. 93

Police Protection Pg. 94-95 includes funding for two additional fulltime shifts per week.

Animal Control Pg 96-97

Noranne Nielsen was present to answer questions of the Council.

Fire Protection-Fire Marshal Pg. 98-99

John Jackman was present to answer questions of the Council.

Fire and Emergency Services Pg. 101-103 Dave Dagon was present to answer questions of the Council. Establish a Municipal Division of Fire and Emergency Services. A career fire chief will be hired to manage this new division of Fire and Emergency Services

Emergency Management Pg. 104-105

4. Revenues (pp. 35-46)

Discussion was on the tax revenues for certain houses. Council member Koehn requested the % growth and taxable grand list for last 10 years. Also requested a list of average taxpayers and what they paid in taxes over the last 5 or 6 years.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

At 10:10 p.m. Mr. Hawkins moved and Mr. Schaefer seconded to adjourn the meeting.

So passed unanimously.

Elizabeth Paterson, Mayor

Joan E. Gerdson, Town Clerk

